

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A ~~matrix~~ particle for controlled release of a fungicide, wherein the particle is solid and generally spherical and is from 0.1 to 200 microns in size and comprises a triazole fungicide dispersed in a polymer matrix, wherein the fungicide-to-polymer weight ratio is from about 1:99 to about 1:1, and wherein the triazole fungicide is selected from the group consisting of bitertanol, bromuconazole, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, epoxiconazole, fenbuconazole, fluquinconazole, flusilazole, flutriafol, hexaconazole, imibenconazole, metconazole, myclobutanil, penconazole, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tetraconazole, triadimefon, triadimenol, and triticonazole ~~formulation comprising particles having a mean diameter between about 3 microns and about 50 microns which contain a triazole fungicide dispersed in a polymer matrix and having a matrix polymer to triazole fungicide weight ratio sufficient to provide a phytotoxicity that is reduced by at least 50% as compared to conventional fast-release formulations of the triazole fungicide.~~

2. (Canceled) The particle of claim 1 wherein the triazole fungicide comprises a compound selected from the group consisting of bitertanol, bromuconazole, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, epoxiconazole, fenbuconazole, fluquinconazole, flusilazole, flutriafol, hexaconazole, imibenconazole, metconazole, myclobutanil, penconazole, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tetraconazole, triadimefon, triadimenol, and triticonazole.

3. (Currently amended) The particle of claim 1 ~~claim 2~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises a compound selected from the group consisting of cyproconazole, epoxiconazole, tebuconazole, triadimefon, and triadimenol.

4. (Original) The particle of claim 3 wherein the triazole fungicide comprises cyproconazole.

5. (Original) The particle of claim 3 wherein the triazole fungicide comprises tebuconazole.

6. (Currently amended) The particle of claim 1 ~~claim 2~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises epoxiconazole.

7. (Original) The particle of claim 1 wherein the polymer matrix comprises a polymer selected from the group consisting of poly(methylmethacrylate), poly(lactic

acid), a poly(lactic acid-glycolic acid) copolymer, cellulose acetate butyrate, a poly(styrene), hydroxybutyric acid-hydroxyvaleric acid copolymer, a styrene maleic anhydride copolymer, poly(methylvinyl ether-maleic acid), poly(caprolactone), poly(n-ethylmethacrylate), wood rosin, a polyanhydride, a polyorthoester, a poly(cyanoacrylate), poly(dioxanone), ethyl cellulose, a ethyl vinyl acetate polymer, poly(ethylene glycol), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), an acetylated monoglyceride, an acetylated diglyceride, an acetylated triglyceride, poly(phosphazene), chlorinated natural rubber, a vinyl polymer, polyvinyl chloride, a hydroxyalkylcellulose, polybutadiene, polyurethane, a vinylidene chloride polymer, a styrene-butadiene copolymer, a styrene-acrylic copolymer, an alkylvinylether polymer, a cellulose acetate phthalate, an ethyl vinyl phthalate, cellulose triacetate, a polyanhydride, a polyglutamate, a polyhydroxy butyrate, polyvinyl acetate, a vinyl acetate-ethylene copolymer, a vinyl acetate-vinylpyrrolidone copolymer, an acrylic polymer, an alkyl acrylate polymer, an aryl acrylate polymer, an aryl methacrylate polymer, a poly(caprolactam), an epoxy resin, a polyamine epoxy resin, a polyamide, a polyvinyl alcohol polymer, a polyalkyd resin, a phenolic resin, an abietic acid resin, a silicone, a polyalkylene oxide, and a polyester.

8. (Original) The particle of claim 1 further comprising a plasticizer.

9. – 11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) A fungicidal composition comprising:

- (a) particles that are solid and generally spherical and from 0.1 to 200 microns in size and which comprise a triazole fungicide dispersed in a polymer matrix, wherein the fungicide-to-polymer weight ratio is from about 1:99 to about 1:1, and wherein the triazole fungicide is selected from the group consisting of bitertanol, bromuconazole, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, epoxiconazole, fenbuconazole, fluquinconazole, flusilazole, flutriafol, hexaconazole, imibenconazole, metconazole, myclobutanil, penconazole, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tetraconazole, triadimefon, triadimenol, and triticonazole having a mean diameter between about 3 microns and about 50 microns which contain a and having a matrix polymer to triazole fungicide weight ratio sufficient to provide a phytotoxicity that is reduced by at least 50% as compared to conventional fast-release formulations of the triazole fungicide, and
- (b) an agricultural adjuvant.

13. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 12 wherein the fungicidal composition is in the form of a liquid suspension.

14. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 12 wherein the fungicidal composition is in the form of a wettable powder.

15. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 12 wherein the fungicidal composition is in the form of a granule.

16. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 15 wherein the granule is a water-dispersible granule.

17. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 12 wherein the agricultural adjuvant comprises a dispersant.

18. (Original) The fungicidal composition of claim 12 wherein the agricultural adjuvant comprises a diluent.

19. – 35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently amended) A method for the treatment or prophylaxis of a fungal disease in a target plant wherein the method comprises contacting a plant cell, a plant tissue, or a seed with particles which are solid and generally spherical and from 0.1 to 200 microns in size and comprise a triazole fungicide dispersed in a polymer matrix, wherein the fungicide-to-polymer weight ratio is from about 1:99 to about 1:1, and wherein the triazole fungicide is selected from the group consisting of bitertanol, bromuconazole, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, epoxiconazole, fenbuconazole, fluquinconazole, flusilazole, flutriafol, hexaconazole, imibenconazole, metconazole, myclobutanil, penconazole, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tetraconazole, triadimefon, triadimenol, and triticonazole ~~particles having a mean diameter between about 3 and about 50 microns which contain a triazole fungicide dispersed in a polymer matrix and having a matrix polymer-to-triazole fungicide weight ratio sufficient to provide a phytotoxicity that is reduced by at least 50% as compared to conventional fast-release formulations of the triazole fungicide.~~

37. (Original) The method of claim 36 comprising contacting a seed with the particle.

38. (Original) The method of claim 37 wherein the contacting is performed before the seed is planted.

39. (Canceled) The method of claim 36 wherein the triazole fungicide comprises a compound selected from the group consisting of bitertanol, bromuconazole, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, epoxiconazole, fenbuconazole, fluquinconazole, flusilazole, flutriafol, hexaconazole, imibenconazole, metconazole, myclobutanil, penconazole, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tetraconazole, triadimefon, triadimenol, and triticonazole.

40. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36 ~~claim 39~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises cyproconazole.

41. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36 ~~claim 39~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises tebuconazole.

42. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36 ~~claim 39~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises epoxiconazole.

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36 ~~claim 39~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises triadimenol.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 36 ~~claim 39~~ wherein the triazole fungicide comprises triadimefon.

45. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein the polymer matrix comprises a polymer selected from the group consisting of poly(methylmethacrylate), poly(lactic acid), a poly(lactic acid-glycolic acid) copolymer, cellulose acetate butyrate, a poly(styrene), hydroxybutyric acid-hydroxyvaleric acid copolymer, a styrene maleic anhydride copolymer, poly(methylvinyl ether-maleic acid), poly(caprolactone), poly(n-ethylmethacrylate), wood rosin, a polyanhydride, a polyorthoester, a poly(cyanoacrylate), poly(dioxanone), ethyl cellulose, a ethyl vinyl acetate polymer, poly(ethylene glycol), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), an acetylated monoglyceride, an acetylated diglyceride, an acetylated triglyceride, poly(phosphazene), chlorinated natural rubber, a vinyl polymer, polyvinyl chloride, a hydroxyalkylcellulose, polybutadiene, polyurethane, a vinylidene chloride polymer, a styrene-butadiene copolymer, a styrene-acrylic copolymer, an alkylvinylether polymer, a cellulose acetate phthalate, an ethyl vinyl phthalate, cellulose triacetate, a polyanhydride, a polyglutamate, a polyhydroxy butyrate, polyvinyl acetate, a vinyl acetate-ethylene copolymer, a vinyl acetate-vinylpyrrolidone copolymer, an acrylic polymer, an alkyl acrylate polymer, an aryl acrylate polymer, an aryl methacrylate polymer, a poly(caprolactam), an epoxy resin, a

polyamine epoxy resin, a polyamide, a polyvinyl alcohol polymer, a polyalkyd resin, a phenolic resin, an abietic acid resin, a silicone, a polyalkylene oxide, and a polyester.

46. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed evenly throughout the polymer matrix.

47. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed as a concentration gradient in the polymer matrix.

48. (Previously presented) A fungicidal composition according to claim 12, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed evenly throughout the polymer matrix.

49. (Previously presented) A fungicidal composition according to claim 12, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed as a concentration gradient in the polymer matrix.

50. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed evenly throughout the polymer matrix.

51. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein the triazole fungicide is dispersed as a concentration gradient in the polymer matrix.